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PRESS RELEASE

"21st Century Technology Lab" Opens in Primary School

The American people, through the USAID Primary Education Project (PEP), are investing in modernization of curricula for technology education with the aim of increasing student interest in technical studies and professions. As part of this effort, PEP is renovating and equipping technology classrooms to initiate "21st Century Technology Labs."

The Lazar Angelovski Primary School in Aerodrom is one of nine schools that will receive such assistance. The Mayor of Aerodrom, Ivica Koneski, joined representatives of USAID and PEP as well as the director, teachers and students of the school to celebrate the renovation and modernization of its technology laboratory. PEP will pilot similar laboratories in five municipalities in Macedonia.

"A significant problem faced by young people today is that the skills and knowledge they gained in school do not match current labor market requirements. And the proficiencies that employers emphasize as most important for modern business need to be developed at an early age. We hope these "21st Century Technology Labs" will attract students to technical subjects and provide them with the skills and knowledge needed for Macedonia's future," said Sharon Kellman Yett, USAID Communication Specialist.

The USAID Primary Education Project, implemented by the Academy for Educational Development (AED), works with all public primary schools in Macedonia. The project seeks to improve the quality of instruction and increase student employment skills. The overall goal of the USAID Education Program is to strengthen education in Macedonia and to support decentralization efforts, as Macedonia seeks entrance to the European Union.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The American people, through USAID, have invested nearly \$500 million in Macedonia since 1993. USAID is implementing projects that create jobs, reduce corruption, and prepare Macedonian students for the workforce. These initiatives improve the quality of life and support Macedonia's transition to a stable and prosperous democracy. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov>.